OPENING OF THE RAILWAY FROM LONDON TO CAMBRIDGE.

The continuation of the Eastern Counties line to Cambridge, Ely, Norwich, and Yarmouth, was opened on the 29th ult. A large number of persons attended at Cambridge, and the whole of the proceedings passed off very satisfactorily.

The most important station on the line is at Cambridge. It is a long, and handsome brick building, with stone dressings, consisting of a double series of arcades; one extending over the siding of the railway, and the other serving as a portico for the carriages arriving at the station. It was designed by Mr. Thompson, and erected by Messrs. Jackson, of Pimlico; as were also the stations at Chesterford and Wenden. Mr. Robert Stevenson was the engineer, and Messrs. Peto and Grissell the general contractors. The stations are all laid down with Seyssell asphalte, and afford a good example of the material.

There was a dinner at Cambridge on the occasion, and our chief inducement to notice the proceedings was, that we might record some remarks then made on the conduct of the workmen employed on the line, and the character of the contractors.

The Dean of Ely adverted in the highest terms to the unremitting excellent conduct of the operatives throughout the line. As a magistrate of Ely, he had had every opportunity of witnessing their demeanour, and it afforded him unspeakable satisfaction to bear the most unqualified testimony to the peaceable, orderly, and sober manner in which they had uniformly conducted themselves. (Cheers.) With three exceptions only, throughout the whole of the period the works had been carried on, not the shadow of a complaint had been made against them, and those exceptions were of the most trifling character; it was due to the labourers to bear this testimony in their favour (cheers), but a still higher measure of justice was due to Messrs. Grissell and Peto, whose judicious and liberal arrangements for the instruction and moral and religious welfare of the numerous band of workmen in their employment, were worthy of all praise, and had been productive of the greatest advantages. (Cheers.) He rejoiced at the accomplishment of the mighty work which had been achieved, and which they were that day met to commemorate. Not only would the material interests of the important districts by which the railway would be traversed be improved to an incalculable extent, but, which was far more important—the moral and intellectual interests of the community would be advanced and improved in a degree which perhaps it was impossible for human ingenuity to estimate. (Cheers.) Greatly as we were indebted to the piety of our ancestors for the stupendous institutions they had founded for the religious advancement of our race—yet were they infinitely surpassed by the mighty efforts which were now in progress, and the union of all that science and art could effect with all the elevation of purpose which characterized the present operations of the present age and controlled their influences, would produce results of the loftiest and most gratifying description.

The Bishop of Norwich was obliged to repeat the sentiments uttered by his friend the Dean of Ely. But if it were a repetition, it was not as tedious as a twice-told tale—for it deserved to be told three times three and "with one cheer more," (cheers) and the tale was the good and exemplary conduct of the railway labourers. (Cheers.) The dean said that, as a magistrate only three cases of misbehaviour had come before him. In Norwich they could surpass the eulogy of the dean, for there they had not one. (Loud cheers.) Not one man throughout the line (loud cheering), but the men were everywhere described as doing their duty like Englishmen, and none ever did it better (cheers), and here he would give credit and honour to whom credit and honour were due. He was himself a churchman, and holding high office in the church, and believed that in that church was the purest faith, but he was still a Catholic Christian (loud cheers), and as such would hold it as a dereliction of his duty if he did not express his approbation, respect, and regard for the exertions used for the moral benefit of the railway labourers by Mr. Peto. All down the line he had met with his agents, and had found them not merely giving directions and instructions, but also giving to the men religious books, and schools for the education of themselves and their children (loud cheers), and thus shewing them that education can civilize the mind, reform the habits, and elevate the understanding. The gin shops were left deserted, and the schools were full. (Cheers.) Who was there who would throw a damp upon the means even the humblest of education, come whence it may. Mr. Peto was a dissenter, and he (his lordship) envied the sect to which he belonged, the possession of such a man; he would gladly purchase him at his own price, and heartily he prayed that he would ere long become a member of the Church of England.

The Vice-Chancellor said, "The world of science had been employed in the accomplishment of the stupendous operations which railway proceeding had developed, but with him it was a source of inexpressible gratitude that not only had the regions of science been resorted to by the men who had created new and vast fields of enterprise, but that they had taken the opportunity which the concentration of the powerful body of artisans and labourers under their direction, and in their employment afforded them of diffusing amongst them the precepts of religion and morality. He bore just testimony to the excellent conduct of the labourers throughout the whole period of the formation of the line, and stated that their attendance at the Norman church, in the neighbourhood of Cambridge, which had been conceded to them at the earnest request of Messrs. Grissell and Peto, had been uniformly marked by diligent attention and reverent devotion.

INSULATED BUILDINGS:

ACCORDING TO THE BUILDINGS ACT.

Sir,—A point that would appear to be one of general interest having arisen between a district surveyor and myself, the following letter, addressed to the district surveyor, which will perhaps suffice to explain the subject, may not be useless:—

"My dear Sir,—I am leaving town to-morrow morning, but hear (even after your assent on Saturday to the proceedings) that you demur to the two houses in Lyndhurst-square, of which you have notice as 'insulated buildings,' upon the ground that they are not twice 30 feet, or in the whole 60 feet apart. I was quite prepared (sanctioned by counsel's opinion), to have proceeded with any additions I chose to make to any "commencement," not offensively setting up my opinion against the referees. My point is, they have no power to limit or control the express words of a public Act; more especially relating to matters clearly not within their province. There can be no question of my perfect right of trying the extent or limitation of the word 'commencement' in a court of law, which I was quite prepared to do, and am still prepared,—if any question is raised—but prefer paying your fee as of "insulated buildings," my object being not collision with authorities, but permission to carry out my barge-boarded pediments, &c., in conformity with the houses already erected.

The objection taken I was quite alive to, and that induced me so cautiously to word my notice.

I had intended some months since to address a letter to THE BUILDER upon the subject; as I do not disguise my intention of so carrying out my operations to some considerable extent in this neighbourhood, as availing myself of a rational permission in this suburban district, believing as I do, that additional ground adds value to the outlay.

I had, however, hoped that no attempt would have been made to pervert the clear and singularly (for this Act) intelligible clause under which I presume you ground your objection.

I cannot avoid remarking, I think it would be but an act of courtesy if district surveyors were to supply the architect concerned in the building with the ground of their objections in writing, when most frequently a dispassionate discussion would settle all points in difference.

The course, however, taken is an appeal to the referees; the first step being, that the district surveyor is called upon formally to state the grounds of his allegations or irregularity; the party, by a transmission of a copy from the referees, obtains the information by a costly mode of proceeding.

I have also been told by a district surveyor, in the presence of the referees, that a party producing a plan of intended operations and seeking advice as to its conformity with the provisions of the Act, the district surveyor is not bound to assent or dissent from its accuracy.

I believe a party serving the district surveyor with a copy of a plan of intended operations, and seeking his advice, which being refused, and for the sake of the argument assuming non-conformity to the provisions of the Act to exist in some parts,—I think, I say (if permitted to proceed, and the errors are eventually complained of), the district surveyor would be told in a common law court that he was not merely ministerially acting, but in respect of the prescribed fee for superintending this particular work, he would be held liable for his wrong doing. If my arguments fail to convince your judgment, I would request, as a preliminary step, the grounds, in writing, of your objections. Should you withdraw your objections, I shall then feel obliged by your so informing me, that my works may proceed without the suspense and doubt of their conformity, which brings me to what I presume to be your grounds of objection, viz., under schedule C, second paragraph, part 7, which, describing what are to be deemed 'insulated buildings,' states:—'And with regard to such building, so far as relates to the *distance* thereof from any other *building*, or from ground not in the same occupation therewith, or connected therewith only by a fence or fence wall, it must be distant from such other *building*, or such other ground, at the least 30 feet.'

We will first try the question by the actual position of my houses. They stand on my freehold, 50 feet from each other; and you have admitted, by measurement with my builder, that no portion of the ground surrounding the houses is within 30 feet 'from ground not in the same occupation;' as no fence or apparent division exists as dividing this 50 feet, I would challenge your authority to call upon me to state to which I meant to attach at least 30 feet.

We will now try the question upon a broad principle. Since hearing of your objection, I have consulted two intelligent legal friends, who not only fully confirmed my views, but expressed surprise how such plain language could be attempted to be perverted—with the permission to erect with any 'dimensions and materials' such buildings. To prevent accidents by fire the controlment is enacted—and if a number of houses were in erection together, 30 feet apart controls the matter; but it clearly was evident to the minds of those who framed the clause that one house only might be built: and then comes the restriction (and which be it borne in mind is in the disjunctive), 'or from ground,' that is to say, you shall not avail yourself of this permission unless you have in the same occupation at least 30 feet of ground, so that any future erection cannot possibly be nearer than 30 feet. Hypothetical cases might be multiplied, but I will not further entangle the discussion thus, or by shewing how readily the clause may be evaded altogether.—Yours faithfully,

GREENWAY ROBINS."

EMPLOYERS AND WORKMEN.—Our notice of entertainments given by employers to the men in their service, and the view we took of the advantages likely to result from such a course, have led correspondents to send us accounts of various similar meetings. Last week more than 200 persons connected with the brewery of Messrs. Hanbury and Co. dined and supped at Rosherville Gardens, near Gravesend, at the expense of the firm, Mr. Davison, engineer, in the chair. A local paper says, "At 8 o'clock the whole party embarked in the most orderly manner on board the Vesper, Star Boat; and it is but an act of justice to add, that if parties holding higher births, and assuming greater rights of civilization, were to conduct themselves throughout a festival of this kind with as much propriety, it would go far to establish a better order of things."

For Info on PDF Compression and OCR visit ThePaperlessOffice.com